

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on May 28, 2013 at the Wethersfield Town Hall, Town Manager's Conference Room – First Floor, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present: Robert Garrey, Chairperson
Michael Rell, Vice Chairperson
Douglas Ovian, Alternate
Lisa Wurzer, Alternate

Members Absent: Cynthia Greenblatt, Clerk
John Maycock
Mark Raymond
Paul Courchaine, Alternate

Also Present: Kristin Stearley, Historic District Coordinator
Linda Messina, Recording Secretary

Commissioner Garrey called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM, and read the opening comments. Commissioner Rell, Clerk, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the *Rare Reminder* on May 13, 2013.

APPLICATION NO. 4154-13. Margaret Taylor seeks to install replacement windows at 371 Garden Street.

Al Vestro, DiGiorgi Roofing & Siding, 719 Silas Deane Highway, and Maureen McCurda, 371 Garden Street, appeared before the Commission. They would like to replace all windows with Marvin Infinity fiberglass windows with simulated divided light. They would like to use the color Bahama Brown for the exterior. The windows are 6/1. They will match existing windows in style and light pattern. They will not replace the ½ round windows or the basement windows. The windows will have ½ screens.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4155-13. Nancy Kotchko seeks to enclose the rear porch and install new windows on the rear porch at 7 Old Pewter Lane.

Adam Gove, Gove Restoration, P.O. Box 290151, and Nancy Kotchko, 7 Old Pewter Lane, appeared before the Commission. Drawings were submitted. There is an existing structure. There are now glass panes and a vertical siding look. They would like to change it to a horizontal cedar clapboard to match the siding on the home. They would like to close off a wall for a closet as submitted on the drawing. They will install corner trim to match the house. They would like to install double-hung 1/1 wood windows with bullnose sills and brick mold casing to match the rest of the home. It will be painted composite.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Gary Vivian, 43 Old Pewter Lane, spoke in favor of the application.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4156-13. Thomas and Tara Bialek seek to construct an approximately 12'x34' deck to surround the above ground pool at 49 Foote Path Lane.

Thomas Bialek, 49 Foote Path Lane, appeared before the Commission. Photos and a plot plan were submitted. They would like to build a deck to surround the pool. The pool is behind a fence. The deck will be 54" tall and will be level with the pool. They will use pressure treated wood and would prefer to leave the bottom of the deck open. They will use fascia board below the deck. The stairs will be the same material as the deck. There will be a self-closing gate at the bottom of the stairs. The new deck will abut the existing deck. The railing system will be pressure treated wood.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4157-13. Cactus Design LLC seeks to construct a new single story home approximately 27'7" high consisting of approximately 2,780 square feet of living space with an attached two (2) car garage which will be approximately 22' high and consist of approximately 480 square feet on a plot of land known as 7 Robbinswood Drive.

Gary Vivian, 43 Old Pewter Lane, appeared before the Commission. A model was provided and on display. Actual square footage is 2,685 square feet. The owners' goal is one floor living. Designs were submitted. All zoning requirements have been met. They had heard that there was some concern about materials on the house. Originally, there was a plan for stone on the front of the house. They didn't want to break tradition, so they took the stone off of the plans and they will use the shakes instead. A sample of the shake material was provided. They will use Marvin Infinity windows in a 6/6 light pattern, double hung, with permanently attached muntins. The shutter will be a composite material painted black. The trim will be a composite. The shingles on the roof will be a pre-approved color, in the dark brown or dark grey family. There will be copper roofing on the cupola and above the bay window on the front. On the front and back there will be 10" columns, three columns on each corner of the front porch and two columns each on the covered back deck. The sliding doors in the back are by Marvin. The doors and the windows have an Ultrex finish. The garage door will be painted. The hardware will be carriage style. The chimney will be cultured stone and there will be no mortar joints. The fiberglass door will be a wood look, mahogany in color, and will have six panels. The cupola will be made of a composite material. The trellis in the back will be all wood. The design details were submitted. The patio below the pergola will be wood Trex material. There will be one step and no lattice. The fascia board will also be Trex. The utilities will be located in the back rear corner. They plan on having a generator and a condenser. They will screen with evergreen shrubbery. The heating system will vent through the chimney. The chimney will have a masonry cap. All exterior lighting will be carriage style. The cementitious will be in the color Heather Grey.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4158-13. C. Brayfield seeks to install piping and wires contained within a white pipe covering on the exterior of the building and a heat pump for a ductless split heat pump system at 20 Rosedale Street.

Chris Brayfield, 34 Walnut Street, New Britain, appeared before the Commission. A sample of the covering for the piping was provided. The pipe covering is paintable. Photos were submitted. They have a ductless heat pump which is a heating and cooling system for the addition and the second floor. It has already been installed. It has one condenser and two air handlers. The condenser has to be kept off the ground due to snow loads. It has to be two feet from the ground per HVAC code.

There is fence around the house. The house has grey vinyl siding and the gutters are white. The condenser has to be 10' away from the gas meter.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4159-13. Bill and Lisa Leonard seek to construct an attached 10'x10' storage shed on the existing garage and to replace the existing wood garage door with a steel garage door at 71 Center Street.

Lisa Leonard, 71 Center Street, appeared before the Commission. They would like to add a shed attached to the rear of the existing garage. It will be 10'x10' in size. There will be no door on the back. There will be windows on either side to match the existing garage. They will replace the existing garage door with a steel Overhead door. Photos were submitted. The siding will be cedar to match existing. Shingles on roof will match existing. They will use true divided light windows with a 6/1 light pattern. They will put in a frost wall and it will match existing foundation.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4160-13. Brian Shea seeks to construct a 6' wood privacy fence at 41 Harmund Place.

Brian Shea, 41 Harmund Place, appeared before the Commission. Photos were submitted. A plan of the layout was submitted. The fence will be all cedar with no exterior posts. The existing fence will be removed. There will be one gate. A design of the gate was submitted. There will be no post caps. The gate will have standard Colonial hardware, black in color, and a latch handle.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4153-13. Town of Wethersfield seeks to install a Fire Fighter Memorial at Fire House #1 located at 171 Main Street. (Tabled at the May 14, 2013 meeting. The last date to act is June 25, 2013.)

Rich Bailey, Fire Chief, 160 Broad Street; Mark Mahder, Wolcott Hill Road; and Bob Lecrenier, 171 Main Street, appeared before the Commission. Photos were submitted. They would like to place the memorial on the right hand side by the flagpoles. It will be placed where the gig is now. The monument is 6' high. The footprint is a 5'x5' square. It will have a standard helmet cast in bronze on top of the monument. There will be a bronze bell hanging inside the monument. The monument is made of four panels of 2" granite. The base is polished chip black granite. There is wording on the plaques that will be etched into the granite.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4136-13. Ardian Latifi seeks to install a 240 gallon above ground propane tank at 225 Middletown Avenue.

This application was withdrawn by the applicant through a note dated May 20, 2013.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovia seconded by Commissioner Rell, and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing and to open the public meeting.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovia, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4154-13. Margaret Taylor seeks to install replacement windows at 371 Garden Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell seconded by Commissioner Wurzer and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

1. The windows shall be Marvin Infinity in the color Bahama Brown with the muntins permanently affixed to the interior and exterior.
2. The light pattern, style, and size shall match the existing.
3. The screens shall be ½ screens.

Discussion

Commissioner Ovian stated that his concern about the channel is less so in the Bahama Brown because you aren't going to see it. Ideally, he thinks that the Commission has to be conscious of replacement windows and where they land in terms of the trim because that's really what makes it look like a real window or not. They've gotten past the point where he thinks they would all agree that it should have an exterior muntin if at all possible but beyond that the thing that is a dead giveaway is whether or not it looks like an insert. He thinks that in white it would be really visible. In this instance, he can live with it the way it is because it is dark. Ideally, you would want the dark screen instead of the silver one. This applicant came before us previously with an application that was denied so he appreciates that they kept looking.

Commissioner Garrey stated that the nice thing about that window versus others is that there's a lot that have that short flat plain and then they really jut out so he prefers this one but he was surprised to see the channel jut out, but he agrees, in brown it will be a lot less. And the grandeur of that house ...

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4155-13. Nancy Kotchko seeks to enclose the rear porch and install new windows on the rear porch at 7 Old Pewter Lane.

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Rell asked if this porch was an addition.

Commissioner Garrey stated that it's nice to have them do wood and instead of asking for an artificial material especially since the body of the house is predominantly aluminum. He did have the same concern about no light patterns but he thinks that there are enough windows there that it will still read as a porch.

Commissioner Ovian stated that this is a beautiful home and all the requisite thinking that you want to have going to the porch has happened. This further step in the evolution will be successful.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4156-13. Thomas and Tara Bialek seek to construct an approximately 12'x34' deck to surround the above ground pool at 49 Foote Path Lane.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovian seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Ovian stated that this has such a minimal impact on the District. The sight lines are very tight. It's centered on the building and the property. You will see it out of season more than you do in.

Commissioner Garrey stated that even with the sight lines, if you're seeing a lot of that deck, you're standing where you shouldn't be. The piece that's most controversial area is where the two decks meet, but you will never see that.

Commissioner Rell stated that he had a concern about the stairs being of the same material.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4157-13. Cactus Design LLC seeks to construct a new single story home approximately 27'7" high consisting of approximately 2,780 square feet of living space with an attached two (2) car garage which will be approximately 22' high and consist of approximately 480 square feet on a plot of land known as 7 Robbinswood Drive.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovian seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

1. The front door gable section shall be sided in either the stone to match the stone used to construct the chimney or the cementitious board proposed for the remaining siding.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that the Commission had a lot of discussion about stone versus no stone, he was never one who thought that a new house should be "matchy matchy", but sensitive to and appropriate in massing. So he was intrigued by the stone and what he was most concerned about on that is that the homeowner has preference on what they want, so he appreciates the stipulation. They hadn't seen the stone proposed either. The multicolor stone with that amount of stone ...

Commissioner Ovian stated that the reason why he is suggesting this is the discussion about whether or not they redrew in reference to the Commission's concerns, concerns him a little bit because personally before, he liked the back better than the front. He thought the amount of stonework on the back ... he liked that it was less than on the front, but the complete absence of stonework on the front, he doesn't know that that really serves the designer's intent either, so he would be curious to let he and the homeowner play with that a little bit. Of course, they could come back on an amendment if they decided that they wanted to do that. Maybe others do like the fact that the front would be all wood look. Beyond that, what he was going to say about the project is that it's really neat how it echoes the single story house across from it so that you go from these two really tall houses facing Broad Street and then taller houses behind it on Robbinswood. It's a good bridge in between. Even

without the stonework on the front, it will still look a little different because of the double and triple poles and he shared a certain amount of trepidation about that, but he thinks it does give it a French country air. It will add something to the District. As far as massing, although it's true that it may meet all of the Zoning requirements it's still hard for most people to believe that there was room for a home like this there, but in the past few weeks as we've gotten used to the design and we've gone over there to see how it will look, you realize how something once it's there could become part of that streetscape. It will be a really nice addition to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Rell stated that the chimney is side-by-side – it's not north to south, it's east to west so you do have a pretty sizeable stone facing you when looking at it up front, so he doesn't think there would be a need for stone on the front. He thinks you have enough stone façade to look at to get that perception that there is stone incorporated into the house. The Nantucket blue ledge with a heather grey siding does not separate ... he's trying to envision what it would look like if you had a light grey/dark grey versus more of a country fieldstone in ledge directly below it just to highlight the fact that you have a stone chimney. He's concerned about the colors blending too much.

Commissioner Wurzer stated that as she wasn't here last week, she didn't hear the discussion about the stones, so she is glad Commissioner Garrey offered his second.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovia, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4158-13. C. Brayfield seeks to install piping and wires contained within a white pipe covering on the exterior of the building and a heat pump for a ductless split heat pump system at 20 Rosedale Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey seconded by Commissioner Ovia and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that there is a lot of justification from an engineering standpoint on where the location is. It is the busy side of the house. It's also the visible side of the house. He's not looking at it like art or architecturally saying he loves the thing, but doesn't have significant impact. He would suggest that the covering be painted to match the siding instead of white. That's his preference but it will still read like a "thing" attached to the house, but we're seeing a lot more unique products with regard to mechanicals. It is interesting, because they must have had to have a permit to do the installation in the first place. He disagrees with Commissioner Ovia because if you look at that side of the house and you have a problem with the run, if it has to be off the ground, which it's a heating unit so you want it off the snow line, then you would ideally want it between those two windows because it reads like a wall-mounted air-conditioner. He doesn't think they've ever approved a heating unit in the District on the exterior of a building. If we can find out from Zoning if it can't be on the ground ... there is a window below where they put it. Regardless, you're always going to have a run from the second floor and you're always going to have a unit somewhere. It's the utility side of the house. It would be highly unlikely it would be on another elevation. He's doesn't look at it differently if "it's done" versus "it's not done" ... it's "would you approve it?"

Commissioner Ovia stated that his biggest problem with it isn't so much the run on the side of the house. That is a relatively common thing now. It probably wouldn't have looked as bad as it does once it got to the condenser. The thing is that this company did the installation without coming to see them first. This particular company has done work in the District before and has tended to pride itself on the work it does in the District. So, he is surprised by the fact that they don't have an approved

permit. He is also surprised that it was concluded that of all the ways that unit could have been mounted, that that was the most preferable one. The problem is that if this is going to be used as a basis for having floating condensers in the District ... it's one thing to have them on the rooftop of a commercial building. It's another thing ... in the past, they've always approved them on the ground. All of the issues might have been addressed if they had gotten a permit. He is sympathetic to the homeowner. There could have been another installation in that same area that could have been more harmonious with the District if it had been done in the right order.

Commissioner Rell stated that this is a busy side of the house and knowing that it has not been properly permitted, but installed, kind of begs the question of if we did not approve it tonight, what would the applicant's process be or what would be the next logical step? He would have liked for some discussion prior to installation, but placing in the back, running up a line in the back and then following the trim line and then inserting in there, you would mask a lot of that. Had they seen it before installation, at least they could have asked that question.

Commissioner Wurzer asked what kind of mechanicals Kristin has authority to pre-approve. This is going to be a new issue that they're going to be facing. Looking at this application, if she were to choose a location for this mechanical, she would have chosen the same location. Personally she wishes that the run weren't so prominent, but looking at it and knowing that there is a fence there, trying to plant around it isn't really going to gain much, so she thinks it's the most reasonable choice that they had.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Wurzer

Nay: Ovia

APPLICATION NO. 4159-13. Bill and Lisa Leonard seek to construct an attached 10'x10' storage shed on the existing garage and to replace the existing wood garage door with a steel garage door at 71 Center Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Ovia stated that even if you could see it, it would be attractive.

Commissioner Garrey stated that this is probably the least impactful thing the Commission is dealing with tonight. It is a beautiful house.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovia, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4160-13. Brian Shea seeks to construct a 6' wood privacy fence at 41 Harmund Place.

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell seconded by Commissioner Ovia and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Ovia stated that it's a good fence.

Commissioner Garrey stated that it's a beautiful fence.

Commissioner Rell stated that he wants to compliment Kristin because the applicant did have a conversation with her. Originally, he was going to go with a white vinyl fence.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

APPLICATION NO. 4153-13. Town of Wethersfield seeks to install a Fire Fighter Memorial at Fire House #1 located at 171 Main Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey seconded by Commissioner Rell and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that the Commission had a lot of discussion on this project. It's been his opinion that it is public art. It doesn't need to in any way blend with the building itself. He knows there were concerns about massing and the more modern elements of the design, but he thinks that you're seeing it without the bell and the cap which are going to soften the look and add a lot of character to the piece. He thinks that the engravings are beautiful if you really look at the size of that pad, the size of the current apparatus in relation to the pad, and the layout of this with the stones, and imagine the height, he doesn't really think you have a massing or sight line issue either. He really likes the piece. It is modern looking and it's glaring which the stone will weather and age as well, but that's part of what he likes about it is that it's unique and it stands out. Everybody loves that apparatus and he is with everyone on that. He hopes they will get a public view on that antique apparatus as well, but he's not trying to judge this in his mind against the apparatus, just as it stands by itself. The Fire Department also loves the piece, they have plans to have it restored, and hopefully, it will have some public view as well.

Commissioner Ovian stated that that's his problem with it because he does like the new monument a lot. He loves the new monument. The question is, do we let Silas Robbins go because Gary Vivian designs an even more beautiful home for the lot or do we save Silas Robbins? It's at least a theoretical issue in terms of what's there. What's there was vintage and the building was designed to be vintage. He looked into the history of the fire station and it was originally supposed to be a stone building that would face Main Street. There was a redesign of the building in response to the public's desire for a more Colonial look to the building and that happened. That's part of his hesitation. If they're dealing with an apparatus that's going to be right in front of the building, that they're respectful of that. Looking at it as public art, it does make him look at it differently.

Commissioner Rell stated that 30 years ago, 1974, it had glass doors, so they've amended those in the past to reflect ... as far as massing, walking by it over the weekend, the place where they intend to put it ... there is no more appropriate place than where the apparatus is now. It is appropriate as a memorial for firefighters. He would support it.

Commissioner Wurzer stated that a lot of thought was put into this. It is a nice piece.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2013

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell, seconded by Commissioner Garrey and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the minutes of the May 14, 2013 meeting.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian

Abstain: Wurzer

OTHER BUSINESS

Public comments on general matters of the Historic District

None.

Report of the Historic District Coordinator

Commissioner Courchaine asked Kristin to look in the handbook regarding discussing design and presenting design. The Commission should be discussing design. It is appropriate in the pre-application meetings where you give advice on appropriate designs and materials. In the hearing procedure, you can make suggestions on design. Commissioner Garrey stated that we should be judging what the applicant presents only on appropriateness. The discussion should only be are we making suggestions to make it more appropriate versus "I think it would look better this way."

Correspondence

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Commissioner Rell, seconded by Commissioner Ovian and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 9:48 PM.

Aye: Garrey, Rell, Ovian, Wurzer

Respectfully Submitted

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Michael Rell
-Clerk -